

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4258

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 3734

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KS, JA

SUBJECT: ROK FONMIN COMMENTS ON ROKG-GOJ UN CONSULTATIONS

1. ROK PRESS THIS WEEK HAS RUN FRONT PAGE ARTICLES ON ROKG-GOJ PLANS TO CONSULT ON STRATEGY FOR KOREAN QUESTION AT 29TH UNGA. TOKYO DATELINED STORIES EXTRACTED FROM JAPANESE PRESS ARTICLES CONTAIN WARNINGS THAT KIM TAE CHUNG TRIAL AND COURT-MARTIAL OF TWO JAPANESE STUDENTS IN ROK COULD EFFECT UNGA COOPERATION.

2. JUNE 10 STORIES REPORTED JAPANESE FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT THAT ROK AND JAPAN PLAN TO CONSULT ON UNGA BUT HAVE NOT YET BEGUN TO DO SO. PRESS JUN 11 AND 12 HAS CARRIED REPORT, ALSO DATELINED TOKYO, WHICH SAYS ROK FONMIN KIM DONG JO TOLD JAPANESE NIHON KEIZAI REPORTER JUNE 10 THAT ROKG WOULD BE SEEKING CONSULTATIONS WITH US AND JAPAN IN NEXT FEW DAYS. ACCORDING TO PRESS. KIM ALSO WARNED THAT IF GOJ REFUSES TO CONSULT BECAUSE OF BILATERAL PROBLEMS RELATED TO COURT CASES THE ROKG WOULD NOT HUMILIATE ITSELF BY ASKING FURTHER FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH THE JAPANESE. KIM SAID THE TWO ISSUES SHOULD BE VIEWED SEPARATELY BY GOJ AND EXPRESSED BELIEF THEY WOULD BE.

3. MOFA UN DIVISION CHIEF LEE HAS TOLD US KIM'S JUNE 10 INTERVIEW PROBABLY FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON THE CASE OF THE TWO STUDENTS. HE
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SAID KIM'S REMARKS ON UNGA, MOST LIKELY MADE IN RESPONSE TO REP-

ORTER'S QUESTION, WERE EXAGGERATED BY PRESS. AS FOR JAPANESE MOFA'S STATEMENT, ACTING ASIAN BUREAU DIRECTOR PARK SOO GIL TOLD EMBOFF IT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN VERY GENERAL RESPONSE TO QUESTION BY JAPANESE PRESS, WHICH, PARK NOTED, IS CURRENTLY DEVOTING ITS ATTENTION TO ALL ASPECTS OF ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS.

4. COMMENT: WITHOUT DISCOUNTING POSSIBILITY THAT STRAINS OVER KIM TAE CHUNG AND STUDENTS COULD AFFECT JAPANESE-KOREAN COOPERATION ON UNGA WE BELIEVE TWO GOVERNMENTS WILL WORK HARD TO KEEP ISSUES SEPARATE. WE VIEW KIM'S REMARKS AS OFF-THE-CUFF, AND DIRECTED AT QUESTION OF JAPANESE INTERFERENCE IN ROK DOMESTIC AFFAIRS IN GENERAL RATHER THAN AT ACTUAL UNGA PREPARATIONS.
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